

# MERCATOR:

OR,

## Commerce Retrieved,

BEING

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

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From Tuesday, July 7. to Thursday, July 9. 1713.

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*The Scots, who are against the Treaty of Commerce, contradict the Arguments they made use of against the Treaty of Union.*

*Another Letter from Scotland to prove it.*

*All that write Letters to the Mercator, are desired to write nothing but Truth.*

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**I**N the last *MERCATOR*, the present miserable Condition of the Trade from Scotland to France, was represented in a very lively manner, by a Manuscript sent from that Country; and if the Contents of that Manuscript are rightly considered, those Scots Gentlemen, who appear warm against the said Treaty, either deserve very ill of their Country, or shew, that they understand very little of the Trade of it; and therefore it may be a Service to them, as well as to the People of Scotland, to let them see a little farther, what the State of their general Trade is now under the present Disappointment; and this shall be done not so much by the *MERCATOR* giving his private Judgment of it, as from the Authority of their own Countrymen, who, as they ought to be the best Judges of it, so, by what follows, it will appear they are fully sensible and convinced of the Fact.

This is said here, because since the Debate of these Things has been made publick, several Letters and Papers have been addressed to the Author of the *MERCATOR*, as well from other Parts, as also from Scotland, in order to satisfy the World, that the People in those Parts are not all of the Opinion, that some have been HERE in this Affair: And also to assist this Paper in the clear stating the Circumstances of the Trade in those particular Places to which they belong; all which shall have Justice done them in this Paper, and be published, as those Branches of the Trade come in order to be spoken of. But as the Scots Trade is the present Subject this Paper is treating of, the following Letter, which came to hand since the last Paper was published, shall be exhibited to publick View; the Matter of which is so much to the present Purpose, and the Subject so clearly represented, that it seems nothing can be more.

To the Author of the *MERCATOR*.

SIR,

" Having read your Papers upon the Subject of the French Trade, I could not refrain giving you some few Hints, from these Parts, relating to the ill Share our part of the Country is like to have in it: And this I conceived might be useful to you, when you should come to speak of our Trade to France, as I understood by some of your *MERCATOR*'s you purposed to do.

" There are severals of our Gentlemen now with you in England, who know well, That at the Treaty of Union, particularly when the Sixth Article of the Union came to be read in the Parliament on the 27th of November 1706, a very long Debate was had in the Scots Parliament; anent the Scots being obliged to enter into the same Prohibitions as the English, and particularly the Wooll, several Speeches were then made in the House, representing the Advantage of the French Trade to the People of Scotland; and particularly those Advantages were said to consist in the French taking off from Scotland, the Fish and the Wool. This was esteemed so great an Advantage to Scotland, that certain Gentlemen, some of them the same, who are now actually against the present Treaty of Commerce, and making the Articles thereof Effectual, were then so zealous for the Trade from Scotland to France, that they brought the Proposal into the Parliament the said 27th of November 1706, for establishing the Liberty of Exporting our Wooll into France, in these Words, as per the Minute of that Day.

" There-



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" Thereafter there was a Clause offer'd to be added to the said Sixth Article, in these Terms: (Viz.) But Scotland, for the space of Years after the first Day of May next, shall be free from, and no ways subject to, the Prohibition and Restrictions made against Exporting Wooll, Skins with Wooll upon them, and Woollen Yarn, which by the Oaths of the Sellers and Buyers shall be made appear to be the proper Growth and Product of Scotland, and spun with in the same, which shall no ways be comprehended under any of the Laws already made in England, or to be made during the space aforesaid.

" The several Speeches made in Parliament upon the Occasion of this Proposal, signified, That Scotland having not a large Quantity of Manufactures to answer the Imports from abroad, were obliged to Export their Wooll unmanufactur'd; and whereas by the Treaty of Union they would come under the same Denomination with the English in France, and have those few Woollen Manufactures, which they did make, Prohibited in France, their whole Trade would be ruin'd, unless the Wooll was allow'd to be Import-ed: and especially it was said, That the Wooll Masters, such we call in Scotland those Gentlemen of the Shires of Gallaway, Dumfries, Roxburghshire, &c. who take their Rents in Wooll, would be impoverish'd in their Estates.

" Upon the refusing this Vote by the Parliament, another Vote follow'd on the 12th of November 1706, upon another Proposal, (Viz.) That all Encouragement be provided for the Heretons in the Wooll Counties, in case the Prohibition of the Exportation of Wooll be approved. This was the only Expedient which could be found out to appease the People of Scotland, for the Loss, which they supposed the preventing the Exportation of their Wool and their Woollen Manufactures into France, would be to them by the Union. It is very strange, any of the same Gentlemen should now be of the Opinion, that the laying open their Trade to France for all their Woollen Manufactures again, should now be of no Advantage to them.

" In consequence of the last mentioned Vote, you will find it in the Articles, that out of the equivalent Money to be given to Scotland for Loss by the Union, the Sum of 14000 l. was set apart to be paid to the said Wool-Masters, after the Rate of 2000 l. per An. for seven Years, which is said to be appointed to encourage the Manufacturing the said Wooll in the Country, that so the Stop of its Exportation might be no Loss to the Country.

" Again, upon the farther Debating the said sixth Article, and the eighth Article, several long Speeches were made in Parliament, particularly by the late Lord Beilhaven, the Laird Saltoun, and others, setting forth, That the French Trade was much more to the Advantage of Scotland than the Trade to England could be, or than England could any way make us amends for. These Speeches may be seen in the 37th, 38th, and 39th Vote of Parliament, Published and Printed by Authority of the same.

" Not that the Exportation of Wooll was always free in Scotland, several Prohibitions having inter-vened, and so also it might have been, had the Union not been concluded; but that those Gentlemen, who have since Argued against the Treaty for an open Trade with France, and admitting the British Manufactures into France upon the low Duties of 1664, were the same, who Proposed and Voted for the above-mentioned Clause for Exporting the Scots Wooll Unmanufactured into France, is very plainly proven, from the Lists of those, who Voted APPROVE or not APPROVE, in the Minutes on the 6th and 8th Article of the Treaty, whose Names also are Printed here, and are Entred in the Rolls or Registers of Parliament.

" Nor was this Point easily parted with, but many Reflections were made here on those Members, who were against the Clause for Exporting our Wooll, as what their Country lost a very great Advantage by.

" In the Debates of the 16th of December, 1706. on the Eighth Report of the Committee appointed to Examine the 6th and 8th Articles of the Union, there were divers Speeches made to prove the French Trade much more to the Advantage of Scotland, than the Trade to England could be; where the Four chief Articles of the Exportation from Scotland to France, were said to be Wooll, Leather, Lead and Fish; and upon the whole, it was offered in Parliament under two Heads, especially by my Lord Beilhaven, 1. That Scotland got nothing by the English Trade. 2. That Scotland were considerable Gainers by the French Trade.

" I shall give you some farther Account of these Things in a Post or two. But by this you will see, that the same French Trade, which some of our People exclaim against now in England as advantageous to the French, and a loss to their own Country, they could openly push at, when it serv'd a Turn, and acknowledge to be so advantageous to Scotland, that they were willing to have a Law made to Export our Wooll to France unmanufactured, rather than not enjoy that French Trade which they acknowledged Scotland gain'd so much Money by.

" I shall give you a larger Account of these Practices in a short while, if this proves of Use to your Undertaking.

YOURS, &c.

Since it has been signified in the *MERCATOR*, that all such Accounts as were to the Purpose now in Hand, from any parts of Britain, would be acceptable; many Letters are sent representing the State of Trade in the several Countries, as it respects France, to be quite different from what some here have affirmed; which shall be made use of, as is said before, as occasion requires: Only it is desired of all, that shall write of these Matters, that they take Care to write nothing but what is agreeable to Truth, and capable of Proof; and they are desired also to Direct such Letters to Mr. Benjamin Tooke, Bookseller, at the Temple-Gate; or to Mr. John Barber, Printer, on Lambeth Hill.



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